



**CITY OF SUNNYVALE  
REPORT  
Planning Commission**

**July 26, 2004**

---

**SUBJECT:** **2003-0938 - Marc Tsuchiya** [Applicant] **Sunnyvale School District** [Owner] - Application for a 7.8 acre site located at **819 West Iowa Avenue** in a P-F (Public Facility) Zoning District (APN: 165-11-007);

Motion                      Use Permit to allow for expansion of the existing Stratford School (grades K-8) from 258 students up to a maximum of 440 students.

**REPORT IN BRIEF**

**Existing Site Conditions**                      Stratford private school

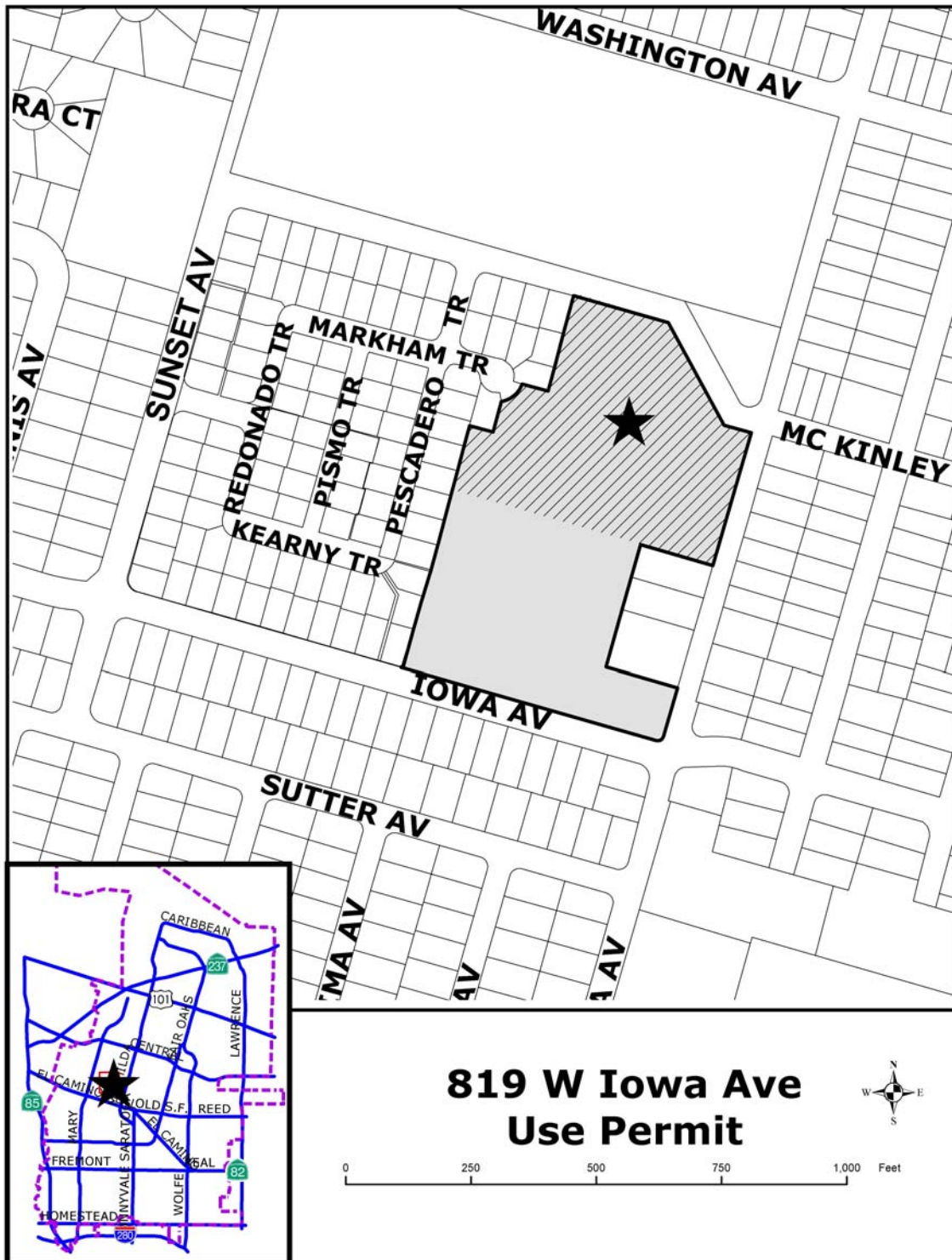
**Surrounding Land Uses**

North	Washington Park – City of Sunnyvale
South	Public Facility – Sunnyvale School District headquarters
East	Low-Medium Density Residential
West	Low-Medium Density Residential

**Issues**                                      Compatibility of the proposed use with the surrounding uses.

**Environmental Status**                      A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act provisions and City Guidelines.

**Staff Recommendation**                      Approval with conditions



**PROJECT DATA TAB**

	<b><u>EXISTING</u></b>	<b><u>PROPOSED</u></b>	<b><u>REQUIRED/ PERMITTED</u></b>
<b>General Plan</b>	SCH	SCH	---
<b>Zoning District</b>	PF	PF	---
<b>Lot Size (s.f.)</b>	7.8 acres	7.8 acres	0 min.
<b>Gross Floor Area (s.f.)</b>	25,550 sf	25,550 sf	---
<b>Lot Coverage (%)</b>	8%	8%	40% max.
<b>Floor Area Ratio (FAR)</b>	7.5%	7.5%	---
<b>No. of Buildings On-Site</b>	6	6	---
<b>No. of Stories</b>	1	1	2 max.
<b>Landscaping (sq. ft.)</b>			
• <b>Total Landscaping</b>	21%	21%	20% min.
• <b>Landscaper Buffer (ft.)</b>	100+	100+	15 ft. min.
<b>Parking</b>			
• <b>Total No. of Spaces</b>	54	54	53 min.
• <b>No. of Standards</b>	47	47	32 min.
• <b>No. of Compacts / % of total</b>	0	0	35% max.
• <b>No. of Accessible</b>	7	7	3 min.

**ANALYSIS**

**Previous Actions on the Site:** The following table summarizes previous planning applications related to the subject site:

<b>File Number</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Hearing/Decision</b>	<b>Date</b>
2003-0452	Use Permit for new Stratford School	Administrative Hearing	2003

**Background**

In summer 2003, Stratford School requested a Use Permit for a private school to allow up to 440 students and 27 full time staff. After comments were received from the City's Transportation Division, it was determined that a traffic impact analysis would be required. Under the City's current policy, any proposed use that generates an increase of 100 peak hour trips or more, over the previous use, is subject to a traffic impact analysis and

environmental review. Stratford School's projected peak trip generation rate exceeded this 100-trip generation threshold and, therefore, would have required a traffic study.

At that time, the applicant was not averse to completing these additional studies but found that the additional level of review would not allow them to meet their projected timeline. The applicant stated that it was critical for the school to be open by the start of the regular school year in September 2003. As a result, the applicant modified the project to reduce the maximum number of proposed students from 440 down to 258. A reduction in the maximum number of students decreased the number of additional peak trips to be less than 100, therefore, a traffic study was not required. This Use Permit was approved at the City's Administrative Hearing on August 4, 2003.

Now the applicant is requesting to increase the maximum enrollment up to the originally requested 440 students. The Planning Commission is reviewing this Use Permit since a Traffic Impact Report and Environmental Review are required.

### **Description of Proposed Project**

Stratford School is an existing private school located at the site previously occupied by the City of Sunnyvale's Senior Center, and formerly operated as a public school (Adair School) by the Sunnyvale School District. Stratford is a year round private school consisting of preschool and elementary schools from grades K through 8<sup>th</sup>. The regular school day hours are from 8:00am to 3:30pm. There is also extended care offered before and after school from 7:00am until 6:00pm. Special events such as back-to-school night and open house are held during the evening hours on an intermittent basis only. The maximum capacity of the school facility, according to the applicant, is 440 students with approximately 27 full-time staff positions. The applicant has applied to increase enrollment up to the facility's maximum capacity.

The proposed use is similar in nature to Stratford's other private school in Sunnyvale, at the DeAnza School site. The school is in its fourth year of operation and has an average yearly enrollment of 560 students.

### **Environmental Review**

A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared for this project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act provisions and City Guidelines. An initial study has determined that, with mitigation, the proposed project would not create any significant environmental impacts (see Attachment 3, Initial Study).

The recommended mitigation measures relate to the traffic impacts that will be generated during drop-off and pick-up times at the school. The mitigation includes phasing of class start and end times, in order to phase the drop-off and pick-up times. These mitigation measures are included in the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Recommended Conditions of Approval.

### **Use Permit**

**Use:** The existing school operates on a year round basis, with the regular school year session beginning in September and ending in mid-June. Summer session would start in early July and end in mid-August. The hours of operation and dates of school sessions are not proposed to be modified with this Use Permit.

There are 440 students proposed for preschool and grades K through 8<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 56% of these students will attend preschool classes and the remaining 44% will attend grades K through 8<sup>th</sup>. The applicant estimates that 50% of the total number of students will be from Sunnyvale. Just over 40% of the students at Stratford's other school site, DeAnza School, are from Sunnyvale.

**Site Layout:** The existing 25,550 square foot building is comprised of approximately 15 classroom spaces, offices, and an auditorium. The applicant has installed two children's playground areas. The first is the preschool playground in the courtyard area between the classroom buildings, and the second is the elementary school playground, to the back of the school near the Sunnyvale School District parking lot.

**Architecture:** The applicant is not proposing any major physical improvements to the interior or exterior of the building. This proposal requires no site or building modifications due to the similarity between the previous and proposed uses.

**Landscaping/Open Space:** Current landscaping on site consists of multiple lawn areas throughout the site and several planting areas. 21% of the site is currently landscaped, which is slightly greater than the 20% required by City code.

The project site is located adjacent to the City's Washington Park. Stratford uses this park on an intermittent basis for special events that are larger than their facility is able to accommodate. The Department of Parks and Recreation has stated there have been no problems with Stratford's use of the park over this past year. The Parks Department also stated they do not

foresee any problems in the future resulting from the proposed expansion of the school.

**Parking/Circulation:** There are currently 54 parking spaces on site, of which 7 are accessible spaces. The proposed expansion will require only 53 parking spaces, so it conforms to the City's parking requirements. The following table reflects the required parking at the site:

<b>Stratford School - Site Parking Analysis</b>			
<b>Type of Use</b>	<b>Number of Employees and Classrooms</b>	<b>Parking Ratio</b>	<b>Number of Parking Spaces Req.</b>
Preschool	18 employees 192 children	1 space/ 1 employee = 18 1 space/ 14 children = 14	32 min.
Grades K – 8th	7 classrooms	3 space/ classroom = 21	21 min.
<b>Total Parking Spaces Required for Site</b>			<b>53 spaces</b>

### **Traffic Study**

The Traffic Division of the Public Works Department determined that a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) was required for this project. This determination was made based on the fact that the proposed increase in student enrollment would cause an increase in the total number of peak hour trips by over 100. Under Sunnyvale Municipal Code, an increase of 100 or more peak hour trips triggers a TIA.

A TIA was submitted to the City by Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. The study analyzed the proposed project's impact in three areas: 1) key intersection level of service, 2) traffic impacts to the surrounding residential neighborhood, and 3) loading and unloading operations impacts. The study made the following conclusions about the three potential impact areas. First, the project would not result in an adverse level of service impact at any of the key intersections studied. Second, the increase in traffic created by the project will not reach a threshold that will be noticeable by surrounding residents. Third, the proposed project will clearly create a traffic demand from student loading and unloading operations that exceeds the ability of site to accommodate.

The applicant does not propose to reconfigure the site to expand queuing or parking capabilities, and a review by a professional traffic engineering firm (Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc.) did not result in identification of any feasible physical changes. Therefore, in order to the site to accommodate the traffic demand from the proposed project, a significant Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program is required to mitigate impacts from student loading and unloading. This program shall be based on managing student drop off and pick up at thresholds determined by the project traffic study. Staff further recommends that the project be conditioned to require review of TDM efforts by the Director of Community Development and the Transportation and Traffic Manager. Modification to the allowable enrollment shall be made in the event that transportation demand management efforts are determined to be insufficient or ineffective.

Historically, there have been traffic issues from the perspective of the surrounding residents in this area. This is due primarily to the two previous uses at the site and secondarily to the pass through traffic that normally circulates through this area. The previous uses were the City of Sunnyvale's Senior Center (15 years) and the Adair Elementary School, which was the original occupant at the site. Staff believes there will not be a significant effect on the surrounding neighborhood with the proposed mitigation.

The TIA was submitted to the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) for review, per Congestion Management Program guidelines. VTA staff comments had to do with cumulative condition traffic analysis and bicycle parking. Staff's response is that the timeframe for completion of the proposed project is not suited to requiring a cumulative analysis, therefore none was required. With regard to bike parking, the VTA bike parking standards for an elementary school are as follows:

- One Class I space for each 30 employees,
- One Class I space for each 24 students, and
- One Class II space for each 24 students.

Class I spaces are defined as bike parking in a secure area (within a fenced off area or within a building). Class II spaces are typical bike racks.

As noted in the TIA, Stratford school currently has a bike rack that could accommodate approximately five bikes. However, no students currently bike to school and none are expected to as a result of the proposed project. The students at Stratford School are very young and few live within a reasonable biking distance. For security reasons, the school requires that young children be escorted by an adult to and from the campus.

To ensure that bicycle parking needs are met on campus, it is recommended that the school provide Class I bicycle parking spaces per the VTA recommendations for school employees. Additional parking for students is not warranted given the nature of the proposed use and transportation restrictions placed on families that attend the school. The school's current practice is to allow teachers who ride bicycles to work, to bring their bikes in the classroom. This practice meets VTA Class I requirements.

### **Transportation Impact Fee**

This project is subject to the Transportation Impact Fee. Condition of Approval 13 requires compliance with the traffic impact fees to be paid prior to the start of the next school session in Fall of 2004.

### **Expected Impact on the Surrounding Neighborhood**

The project site is surrounded on two sides by low-medium density residential uses and by public open space (Washington Park and the Sunnyvale School District administrative offices on the other two sides). Staff expects there will be an increase in peak hour traffic near the site, but believes this increase will not be a significant impact to the surrounding neighbors. The increase in traffic will be mitigated by the staggered hours of operation at the school.

### **Compliance with Development Standards**

The proposed project complies with all current development standards. No further improvements are required at this time.

### **Expected Impacts for Sunnyvale Schools**

This site is located within the Sunnyvale School District boundaries. Stratford estimates that 50% of their students population, or about 220 students, will be Sunnyvale residents. This is a significant number of students who will attend private school, rather than public schools, and may help to provide relief to Sunnyvale classrooms.

In addition to providing help to Sunnyvale schools, this project will also provide financial income for the Sunnyvale School District. Sunnyvale School District owns this property and leases the site to Stratford. The School District stated that this was a desirable lease since the site has a limited number of potential tenants who could use such a facility.



---

**Findings, General Plan Goals and Conditions of Approval**

---

Staff was able to make the required Findings based on the justifications for the Use Permit.

- Findings and General Plan Goals are located in Attachment 1.
- Conditions of Approval are located in Attachment 2.

---

**Fiscal Impact**

---

No fiscal impacts are expected.

---

**Public Contact**

---

<b>Notice of Mitigated Negative Declaration and Public Hearing</b>	<b>Staff Report</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Published in the <i>Sun</i> newspaper</li><li>• Posted on the site</li><li>• <u>201</u> notices were mailed to the property owners and tenants within 300 ft. of the project site</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Posted on the City of Sunnyvale's Website</li><li>• Provided at the Reference Section of the City of Sunnyvale's Public Library</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Posted on the City's official notice bulletin board</li><li>• City of Sunnyvale's Website</li><li>• Recorded for SunDial</li></ul>

---

**Alternatives**

---

1. Approve the Use Permit with the Recommended Conditions of Approval found in Attachment 2.
2. Deny the Use Permit and direct staff to work with the applicant on a revised application.
3. Approve the Use Permit with modified Conditions of Approval.

**Recommendation**

---

Alternative #1.

Prepared by:

---

Steve Lynch  
Project Planner

Reviewed by:

---

Fred Bell  
Principal Planner

Reviewed by:

---

Trudi Ryan  
Planning Officer

Attachments:

1. Recommended Findings
2. Recommended Conditions of Approval
3. Mitigated Negative Declaration/Initial Study
4. Site and Architectural Plans

**Recommended Findings - Use Permit**

---

1. The proposed use attains the objectives and purposes of the General Plan of the City of Sunnyvale as the project.

**Land Use and Transportation Element*****Policy C4.3 Consider the need of business as well as residents when making land use and transportation decisions.***

Stratford School is a desirable use for the City that will provide a service to the City that cannot be provided by any other similar public school.

***Policy N1.14 Support the provision of a full spectrum of public and quasi-public services that are appropriately located in residential, commercial, and industrial neighborhoods and ensure that they have a beneficial effect on the surrounding area.***

Stratford School will be appropriately located in a zone where the school will be compatible with the surrounding residential uses. There are a limited number of sites in the City where a private school use could be located without adversely affecting surrounding businesses and residents. This site is appropriate since the facility exists and since the site was originally used as an elementary school.

2. The proposed use is desirable, and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property, improvements or uses within the immediate vicinity and within the Zoning District.

The project does not propose any significant site or building improvements that would be noticeable to the surrounding neighborhood. The previous uses of this facility were an elementary school and a senior center, so the increase enrollment will not have a significant effect when mitigated. Staff has determined that there would be no significant impacts to the surrounding properties, including traffic impacts.

**Recommended Conditions of Approval – Use Permit**

---

In addition to complying with all applicable City, County, State and Federal Statutes, Codes, Ordinances and Resolutions, the Permittee expressly accepts and agrees to comply with the following Conditions of Approval.

**Planning Department:**

1. The Use Permit for the use shall expire if the use is discontinued for a period of one year or more.
2. This Use Permit shall be null and void two years from the date of approval by the final review authority at a public hearing if the approval is not exercised, unless a written request for an extension is received prior to expiration date.
3. The conditions of approval shall be reproduced on a page of the plans submitted for a Building permit for this project.
4. Hours of operation shall be limited to the following hours:  
Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
5. Intermittent special events permitted during evening hours and on weekends are permitted.
6. The maximum number of students at any one time shall not exceed 440.
7. The existing landscaping on the site shall be maintained and made to be visually enhancing to the site.

**Building Department:**

8. Obtain Building Permits prior to any construction for the proposed work at the site.
9. The conditions of approval shall be reproduced on a page of the plans submitted for a Building permit for this project.

**Fire Department:**

10. All illuminated exit signs need to be operational.
11. All emergency lighting equipment needs to be operational.

**Mitigation Measures:**

12. In addition to complying with applicable City Codes, Ordinances, and Resolutions, the following mitigation measures are incorporated into the project to minimize the identified potential environmental impacts. All mitigations are to be completed by the developer prior to occupancy.
  - a) The applicant shall provide a Transportation Demand Management Program that limits loading and unloading of students to no more than 80 students per 15 minute period in the Pastoria Avenue parking lot, and no more than 75 students per 15 minute period in the McKinley

Avenue parking lot, and prevents school traffic from queuing on City public streets adjacent to or at the entrances to the project parking lots.

- b) In the event that school traffic is witnessed to be queuing onto City public streets adjacent to or at the entrances to the project parking lots in a chronic fashion, as determined by the City Transportation Manager, the operator of the proposed use shall be required to submit to the Director of Community Development and the Transportation and Traffic Manager detailed information on the operation of loading and unloading, including an explanation of administration and management of TDM on the site, determination of trip generation and trip distribution through detailed traffic counts, queuing surveys over the entire loading and unloading periods, and data on average loading/unloading time per child. The operator shall also submit proposed measures to relieve queuing on City streets through increased TDM. The Director of Community Development and the Transportation and Traffic Manager may then approve more stringent TDM measures, or require modification/reduction of allowable enrollment.
- c) Provide Class I bicycle parking spaces as defined by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Bicycle Technical Guidelines in the ratio of one space per 30 employees.

**Transportation Impact Fee**

- 13. This project is subject TIF, to be determined by the City's Transportation Division.